Teaching Your Bird Tricks With Treats

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Your bird is surprisingly intelligent and very eager to learn. His active, receptive mind will quickly grasp tricks and tasks sure to amaze and entertain you. Taking time to teach him a wide range of playful and practical tasks strengthens your bond and prevents birdie boredom (and its resulting bad behaviors).

Boost training success with treats

A little positive reinforcement – your kind words plus favorite treats – goes a long way. Treats can coax reluctant birds and easily establish and reinforce positive behavior. Choose a treat your bird is crazy about. Give treat rewards consistently and immediately, so he associates the treat with successful completion of a desired action. Keep the treat "special," and use it for training only.

Also, limit training sessions to 2-3 minutes, 2-3 times a day. Otherwise, your bird will become bored and move on to other activities while you're still trying to train.

Which treats are best?

Training treats should be small and easy to eat, so he can consume them quickly and not become distracted from his task. These treats are perfect for training:

- Our Basic Seeds – especially pumpkin and gray striped sunflower seeds – are irresistible incentives.
- Our Unsalted Nuts reward progress with 5 nutty favorites.
- Yogurt Yummies Big Bites and Kaytee Yogurt Treats combine favorite flavors into one great reward.
- Pieces of your bird's favorite fresh fruit or vegetable are also ideal.

What do you want to teach?

Your bird can learn lots of fun and practical things:

- "Step up" from a perch or other surface onto your hand
- Acceptable behavior during nail trimming or other grooming
- Talking (parrots especially)
- Tricks, including nodding, waving, shaking hands, bowing, and dancing

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Be sure to break larger treats into small bites, and shell seeds and nuts for faster consumption. Always remember to keep treats at 10% or less of his daily diet.

Drs. Foster and Smith Unsalted Nuts

Drs. Foster and Smith Basic Seeds

Yogurt Yummies Big Bites

Kaytee Mango Nuggets

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